



## TOP 10 RULES FOR CITY CANDIDATES

As a candidate for elective office in the City of San Diego, you are responsible for ensuring that your campaign committee and staff comply with the City's campaign laws. In other words, if someone working for your campaign (regardless of whether the staffer is a volunteer or a paid professional) violates the City's campaign laws, you are responsible for their actions and will be required to pay any fines levied by the Ethics Commission. In order to avoid inadvertent violations, you are strongly encouraged to study the Ethics Commission Candidate Manual, the Ethics Commission's campaign-related fact sheets, and the Fair Political Practices Commission Campaign Disclosure Manual for Local Candidates, all of which are available on the Ethics Commission's website at [www.sandiego.gov/ethics](http://www.sandiego.gov/ethics).

Some of the most important rules for City candidates to remember are as follows:

1. Carefully review your committee's campaign statements before they are filed and before you sign them under penalty of perjury. Be sure you understand everything that is disclosed on your committee's campaign statements. Ask your treasurer or staff if you have questions.
2. Do not spend your personal funds on your campaign without first depositing them into your committee's bank account.
3. Do not loan your committee more than \$100,000 at any one time.
4. Remember that you are personally responsible for all of the debts incurred by your campaign committee. You have 180 days after you receive goods or services, or after you receive an invoice (whichever comes first) to pay your campaign debts. If you can't raise enough money in this time period, you will have to contribute personal funds to your committee to ensure that the committee's debts are timely paid.
5. If you are raising money for more than one election, remember that you cannot spend money raised for one election on expenses associated with an earlier election. In other words, if you are raising money for the primary and general elections at one time, do not spend the general election contributions on expenses associated with the primary election.
6. An unpaid campaign debt must be disclosed as an "accrued expense," and carried forward on subsequent campaign statements until paid.
7. If a campaign staffer, advertising agency, or consulting firm makes a payment of \$500 or more to someone else on your behalf, this "subvendor payment" must be disclosed separately on a campaign statement.
8. Be sure that your committee keeps good records related to the contributions it receives and the expenditures it makes. These records must be kept for a period of four years, and will be requested by the Ethics Commission if your committee is selected for audit.
9. Be sure that your campaign literature includes a proper "paid for by" disclosure and that written solicitations for contributions include the required warning regarding reimbursement.
10. Remember that your responsibilities as a City candidate do not end if you lose in an election. You are required to file campaign statements until your committee is terminated, even if you have no activity to disclose.

Contact the Ethics Commission at (619) 533-3476 if you have any questions. Do not wait to seek assistance until after you've made a mistake.